

April 20, 2023

Dear New Hampshire State Representatives:

We, the undersigned, serve the Granite State as local officials. We represent many of the same constituents as you and enjoy a similar obligation to ensure the safety of our communities. It is from this obligation that we urge you to oppose [SB 132](#).

As part of our commitment to ensuring the safety of our constituents and communities, we have, in light of robust research and recommendations from leading police training associations, taken steps to eliminate biased policing and ensure that all of our residents feel safe and welcome. Without this assurance, as research has shown, certain community members who may lack immigration documentation for themselves or may have family or friends without documentation may be reluctant to come forward to our law enforcement officers when they are a victim of or witness to a crime.¹ This makes us all less safe.

SB 132 would undermine the proactive steps we as local officials have taken to strengthen the safety of our communities. For example, SB 132 would undermine the following:

- Town of Hanover, Ordinance #38 (Fair and Impartial Policing): “The Town of Hanover and its law enforcement officers recognize and affirm that: 1. If an individual is undocumented in the United States, this is not a crime; immigration is a civil matter. 2. Department officers may not stop, detain, arrest, or otherwise hold an undocumented individual, absent reasonable suspicion of criminal conduct.”
- City of Lebanon, Ordinance 2020-19 (Welcoming Ordinance), “no agent or agency of the City of Lebanon shall: a. accept requests by Federal immigration authorities to support or assist in operations that are for civil immigration enforcement; b. permit Federal immigration authority access to a person being detained by, or in the custody of, the Agent or Agency; c. permit Federal immigration authorities use of agency facilities for investigative interviews or other investigative purpose; d. respond to Federal immigration authorities’ inquiries or share information about an individual with Federal immigration authorities.”
- Town of Harrisville, Article 9, Approved at the 2017 Town Meeting: “In order to ensure that Harrisville is a safe and welcoming community, to see if the Town will direct that its Police Officers, in the performance of their routine duties in Harrisville, will not ask any person about his or her immigration status and will refuse to share information regarding any person with the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), except in cases involving allegations against such a person of violent criminal activity or of a

¹ See, e.g. Carmen M. Gutierrez & David S. Kirk, *Silence Speaks: The Relationship between Immigration and the Underreporting of Crime*, PMC, 2017 Jul; 63(8): 926–950; Cora Engelbrecht, *Fewer Immigrants Are Reporting Domestic Abuse. Police Blame Fear of Deportation*, NY Times, June 3, 2018.

violation of NH State felony laws. The objective of this Town Policy is to: (a) reserve limited local law enforcement resources to the function properly assigned to them; (b) encourage, not discourage, cooperation in law enforcement efforts by victims, witnesses, and suspects of criminal activity; (c) serve the interests of economic development in Town; (d) preserve our diverse local cultural characteristics; and (e) avoid undermining or harming familial and community relations.”

In addition, many towns and cities throughout the state - Concord, Laconia, Dover and Nashua to name a few - have enacted resolutions which express the community’s desire that all residents and visitors experience welcome and safety within that municipality. See this example from [Somersworth, NH](#). We believe that SB 132 will erode our communities’ ability to be welcoming and safe places.

To ensure that our communities can continue to strengthen the trust between our law enforcement professionals and marginalized community members, we urge you to vote ITL on SB 132. Thank you for standing up for the safety of our communities.

Sincerely,

Mayor Joyce Craig, City of Manchester
Mayor Bob Carrier, City of Dover
Deputy Mayor Dennis Shanahan, City of Dover
June Trisciani, City of Manchester Alderman At-Large
Pat Long, City of Manchester Alderman, Ward 3
Mary Heath, City of Manchester Alderman, Ward 7
Will Stewart, City of Manchester Alderman, Ward 2
Robert J Hinkel, Dover City Councilor, Ward 2
Linnea Nemeth, Dover City Councilor, At-Large
Zandra Rice Hawkins, Concord City Councilor, Ward 10
Matt Gerding, Somersworth City Councilor, At-Large
Andrew Maneval, Chair, Harrisville NH Select Board
Tyler Ward, Chairperson, Peterborough Select Board
William Kennedy, Peterborough Select Board
Bill Taylor, Peterborough Select Board
Maggie Fogarty, Member, Dover School Board
Chris Potter, Manchester Board of School Committee
Jason Bonilla, Manchester Board of School Committee
Karen Soule, Manchester Board of School Committee
Leslie Want, Manchester Board of School Committee
Jonathan Weinberg, Member, Concord School Board
Lina Shayo, Chairperson, Racial Equity and Inclusion Committee, City of Dover